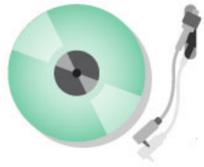
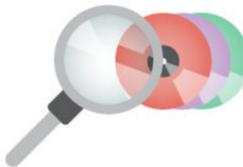


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It Happened Last Night

Tiny Masters of Today Bring Down the 'House'

By [Gavin Paul Giovagnoli](#) on October 19, 2007 2:00 AM [Comment](#)



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Despite the 'sold out' marquee, the Bowery Ballroom was actually penetrable last night (Oct. 18); evidence that CMJ '07 is kickin' some serious booty, perhaps? Is New York City wearing you down, dear festival attendees?

But while the venue was chiefly vacant, the stage was a different story -- opens the **Grey Race** deserve an award for max sonic capacity, squeezing drummer Ethan Eubanks in a five-foot space amidst every subsequent acts' equipment. It didn't faze the recent Unfiltered Records signees as they made light of the dinky crowd, dropping clever lyrics about the meaning of the world ("On the Chin") and giving between-song props to purveyors of sudsy good times, Miller and Bud. The trio are an odd mix of West Coast percussion (Eubanks), New York City rhythms (Jeff Hill/bass) and New Zealand wit (Jon Darling/vocals), that, partnered with some demonic pop duel harmonies, bring back those days of sweet album-dependent, late '90s all-rock a la the Wallflowers. But here, quite a few shades darker, as broadcasted on the set's standout track, "Goodbye to You," which could have been a Queens of the Stone Age B-side.

Next, **Stardeath & White Dwarfs** kicked it up a much-needed notch, blasting a set of Black Sabbath-era guitars and Animal Collective-quirk that caught the crowd just a bit off guard. With a stream of otherworldly, blindingly bright lights, Stardeath and White Dwarfs seriously jammed psych-indie from another planet. Of course, it helped that vocalist Dennis Coyne was suited in a Bay City Rollers-type leotard, and ahem, hence the last name, is closely related to another intergalactic being, Flaming Lips frontman **Wayne Coyne**, who is the young rocker's uncle. Epic wall of distortion ballad "Birth" arrived complete with creepy crying baby sound-effects, while the raw-on-name-alone closer, "Springtime in Martha Stewart's Head," spouted crunchy guitar and dizzying cymbal pounding, closely rivaling Uncle Wayne's psychedelic cred.



Later, another youthful Brooklyn-based outfit, **Tiny Masters of Today**, took the stage. Call it hype. Poke fun at the fact that their friends can't get into their shows. But brother-sister duo Ivan (13) and Ada (11) do have an early onset of a true punk ethos. By the second track, they were "Stickin' It to the Man" and sporting I-don't-give-a-damn smiles and postures absent of nerves. The moment of pre-teen zen came mid-set with a track about Dubya and "how much [they] don't like him," the aptly titled, "Bushy." "Lie to the people, but we don't care / 'cause you're the one with pink underwear," shot Ada. The now pretty ample crowd would have been content with that sweet political stab, but the siblings then churned out a punky rendition of House of Pain's "Jump Around," Ada laboring on the ax and scream fills, Ivan throwing rhymes, "I'm the cream of the crop / I rise to the top." Word.



Topics: [Gavin Paul Giovagnoli](#), [It Happened Last Night](#)

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